MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: It is under investigation by the Division Peishkar, Kottayam.

MR. K. BALAKRISHNA MENON (*Kunnatnad* cum *Parur*): May I know whether this question has not arisen this time last year on the floor of the House?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: I do not remember, Sir.

Price of rice.

164. ❋ MR. P. KOCHUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Tiruvalla*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) the price per beg at which the Madras Government sell rice;

(*b*) the price per bag in Travancore; and

(*c*) if there is any disparity, the reason for the same?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: (*a*) According to information received from the Government of Madras, it is seen that in the Madras City, the wholesale price of rice, second sort, is Rs. 18-10-1 per bag of 2 maunds while in the other Districts, the price ranges from Rs. 17-4-6 to Rs. 22 per bag.

(*b*) Rs. 26-8-0 per bag of 160 lbs. net.

(*c*) There is disparity. The reason is that while the main bulk of rice sold in Madras is produced in the Province itself, the rice sold here is purchased from places like Sind, Punjab and Central Provinces, where the price to be paid for the grain and the charges incurred for transport to the State are comparatively high.

MR. P. O. THOMAS: May I know the price of the Sind, the Punjab and the Central Provinces rice per bag?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: The price of rice in the Punjab is Rs. 25-1-4 per maund and in Central Provinces Rs. 13-2-0 per maund. In sind it is Rs. 12. to Rs. 12 As. 8.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: What is the shipping freight and the railway freight from the Punjab to Travancore, per maund?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: The shipping freight will roughly come to Rs. 8 from Karachi to Cochin. I cannot say about the various railway freights.

PRESIDENT: Order, order. We are getting it by shipment mainly from Karachi to Cochin.

MR. P. M. VERGHESE: May I know why it is stated as two maunds in one case and as 162 lbs in the other? Is the quantity the same? In other words, I wish to know whether the two maunds represent 162 lbs?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: No. It can be easily calculated.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: What is the price per bag in Cochin?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: I do not know exactly.

MR. E. K. MADHAVAN: May I know the weight in maunds per bag of rice.

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Two maunds each of 82 2/7 pounds.

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MR. P. KOCHUKRISHNA PILLAI: May I know whether the Government are in a position to increase the quantity?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Yes, Sir. The matter will be considered.

Supply of ration to hotels.

165. *MR. P. KOCHUKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) whether hotels in the towns are given full ration;

(*b*) if there has been a reduction, by what percentage; and

(*c*) whether the Government are aware of the difficulties felt by people, who have to go to towns on business and who will have to stay there temporarily, in the matter of getting meals in hotels?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The units allotted have been reduced by 50 per cent with effect from May 1946.

(*c*) Yes.

Ration Merchants.

166. *MR. P. S. MOHAMED: Will the Government be pleased to state whether they have received representations from merchants about the hardships caused to them on account of the indiscriminate enforcement of direction that any punishment of the licensees will disqualify them from carrying on ration trade on food-grains?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: Yes. The attention of the member is invited to the Press Note dated 27th June 1946.

Retail foodgrains dealers in Parur taluk.

167. *MR E. K. MADHAVAN: Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) the number of retail dealers in food grains in Parur taluk at present;

(*b*) how many of them are old licensees;

(*c*) how many new licenses were given during Edavom and Mithunam 1121; and

(*d*) how many of the new licensees are now actually dealing in food grains?

MR. K. R NARAYANA AIYAR: (*a*) 154.

(*b*) 147.

(*c*) 11.

(*d*) 7.

MR. E. K. MADHAVAN: In answer to part (c) the Director has stated "eleven" as the number of new licenses given during Idavom and Mithunam 1121. But in answer to part (d) it is stated that only seven are functioning. May I know the reason why the other four are not functioning?

MR. K. R. NARAYANA AIYAR: I do not know the reason. I myself have to call for the information. I must get the information from the Tahsildar.

MR. D. THOMAS (*Kalkulam* cum *Vilavancode*): In answer to (c) it is stated that eleven licensees are working and out of these eleven, only seven are functioning and four of them are not functioning. Are those non-functioning merchants still holding their licences?

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